



BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT SCRIPTS



Go-To Words To Help You Bring Calm &
Peace To Dysregulated Behavior

The Simple Parent Scripting Formula:

REGULATE



The most important step to begin with is your own emotional regulation. If you do not have a handle on your emotions, and you do not approach your child's behavior calmly, you can not expect them to re-regulate quickly.



VALIDATE



Most of the time, our children are looking to us for acknowledgement that they are feeling something that is causing the behavior we are seeing.



INVESTIGATE



There is much more happening with your child than just bad behavior. You must become a detective and walk backwards from the point you are currently to the beginning, where the trigger occurred.



RE-REGULATE



Once you've validated their emotions, and you've spent time investigating the cause of the trigger, help your child re-regulate their emotions. Remember: this is your primary goal in managing behaviors (before correction or discipline).

Script Examples:

- **Personal Regulation:**

- Text a friend before you respond
- Take a few deep breaths
- Tag team if you are co-parenting
- Mentally coach yourself:
 - "Remember, this is trauma behavior, it's not about me!"
 - "He's in survival mode. I need to help him get back to regulation first."
 - "There's something else going on here."

- **Validation:**

- "I see that you're upset...how can I help you right now?"
- "I can tell that you're frustrated...what can I do to help you calm down?"
- "It seems like you're angry, how can I help you right now?"
- "It seems like you feel [name the feeling/or what you see]..is there something I can do to make you feel better?"
- "Oh, I'm really sorry that happened. That would frustrate me too!"

- **Investigation:**

- **NOTE- the Investigative stage may need to be a part of Re-Regulation if the child's emotions prevent him or her from articulating their thoughts and feelings.*
- "Why do you think you're feeling this way?"
- "What is causing you to feel angry?"
- "Why do you think that made you feel so upset?"

- **Re-Regulation:**

- Take time to...
 - Listen to what they are saying
 - Sit with them as long as it takes for them to calm down
 - Help them process and come up with solutions
 - Examples:
 - "I'm here to help you in anyway I can."
 - "I'm not going anywhere. I will stay here with you If you need me to."
 - "Let's take a walk while we calm down."
 - "What can we do to help you feel better?"

Additional Examples:

- **Crucial Communication:**

- "I would love to help you find a way to feel better, but first I need you to stop screaming at me."
- "I know that you are feeling anxious or [insert emotion here], but we can't call people names. Would you be able to stop doing that so we can talk about how you are feeling?"
- "It's okay to feel angry, or hurt, about something, but It's not okay to hit your sister. Let's talk about this but then I need you to apologize to her."

- **Boundaries:**

- "I understand you are curious, and If you have questions, you can ask me, but remember- private parts are private. And we need to always make sure we are dressing In privacy." (this could also be used to explain why knocking on a bedroom or bathroom door before entering Is Important).
- "I know you wanted to play In your brother's room, but remember, It's Important that we stay where mommy and daddy can see you."
- "You can always have a snack If you feel hungry. You just need to ask me first. The answer Is always yes, but with permission."

- **IMPORTANT KEYS:**

- Tone, body language, facial expressions, and personal regulation are all crucial elements of successfully communicating boundaries, or details you need the child to understand.
- Using words like "we" verses "you" lets the child know you are "with them In this." When you use words like "you" they tend to build walls between you and the child. When you shift "you" to "we" It lets the child know you are Invested and thus builds bridges between you and the child.